

A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES

[A JOB LIKE NO OTHER]

A career in social services is a job like no other, in fact it's much more than just a job. It's a career that makes a difference.



Scottish
Social Services
Council

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INTRO¹



[MUCH MORE THAN JUST A JOB]



INTRO

A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES

A career in social services is a job like no other, in fact it's much more than just a job. It's a career that can give you a pivotal role in another person's life. Social service workers provide practical help and support to individuals and families in times of crisis. They empower service users, assisting them to make informed choices which will improve their lives. They make difficult decisions and at times enforce the law.

There are over 138,000 social service workers in Scotland today working with a variety of different service user groups including individuals with mental health problems, older adults living in care homes or children attending nursery. Most people will come in to contact with social services in their lifetime. Whether you are the person using a service or it's a friend or relative, you'll know how important a quality care service can be. Most people can think of an instance when a social service worker has made a real impact on their life, whether it's a care assistant who provided care to their grandmother or a nursery worker who made it a little bit easier to say goodbye to their child at the nursery door. Good social service workers inspire confidence in the people who use services, their carers and families.



I would like a worker to be kind. I would like them to treat me the way anybody else would. I would like them to trust me and I will trust them. Workers should listen to people who use services. You should be treated as an individual and not a child.

A service user

WHAT KIND OF WORK IS IT?

There are many different jobs within social services, requiring a range of skills. You can choose to work in social care, early education and child care or as a social worker. You can work with a variety of service user groups in the statutory, private or voluntary sector. These include:

- ▶ children and families
- ▶ older adults
- ▶ people with mental health problems
- ▶ people with physical or learning disabilities/difficulties
- ▶ individuals who have experienced substance misuse
- ▶ people who have experienced homelessness
- ▶ individuals affected by HIV/AIDS
- ▶ individuals in youth and criminal justice services
- ▶ individuals who have been adopted and/or fostered
- ▶ refugees and asylum seekers.



JOHN J. MACKIE
AGE: 38

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:

Unit Manager, Wellington School, Penicuik

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

Supervision of staff/Case Managers, day to day manager of residential unit, developing and implementing policies and procedures/evaluation and monitoring services offered.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

Before becoming involved in social work as a career, I was a Pipe Welder. I served four years' apprenticeship and attended college. I worked at Torness Nuclear Power Station and latterly with Vicrens Marine Engineers in Edinburgh. I decided to change career as I was interested in working directly with people and wanted new challenges and opportunities.

CAREER ROUTE:

I started my career in social services in 1994 when I took up a position as a Residential Childcare Officer at St. Joseph's School, East Lothian Council. I then worked in a number of residential child care positions for Edinburgh City Council while undertaking the BA in Social Work at Dundee University. In 2001 I began working as a Social Worker for three years at Captain's Road Social Work Centre. During this time I gained a Certificate in Child Protection Studies. In 2004 I took up my present position as Unit Manager at Wellington School, Penicuik.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

A career in social services provides an opportunity to work in a variety of diverse situations and circumstances. It allows you to work directly with people and actually contribute towards improving people's lives and to promote positive change in individual and community settings.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB?

Limited resources, inter agency communication working, balancing rights of a child against policies/procedures/the young person's best interests. Working in partnership with children and families who may be opposed to statutory interventions.

IN WHAT WAY IS A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES REWARDING?

Achieving positive outcomes for clients, work within a culture of positive values and principles, empowering service users to obtain more control over their own lives, working within an environment which promotes continued professional development.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

Continuing to work within the context of the children and family sector. I am currently undertaking a management course with the Open University.

Settings vary too, social workers are usually office based but much of their day is spent visiting people in the community, hospital or other setting. Social care workers can work in care homes, in a service user's own home or a tenancy that is owned by a local authority, voluntary or private organisation. Early education and child care workers can work in a nursery or playgroup as well as out of school care and crèche settings and work with children and families.

WHAT SKILLS DO YOU NEED?

GETTING ON WITH OTHERS

A career in social services involves working with people, so you will need to have a patient and understanding nature and the ability to understand and put yourself in the position of other people. You will need to be able to make difficult and life changing decisions based on evidence and the views of others. You must be able to establish relationships and learn to overcome barriers to communication. You'll need to be non judgemental and remember that every person is different. You will always need to treat people the way that you would like to be treated yourself.

FINDING SOLUTIONS

You'll need to be a good problem solver. Some of the problems you will be faced with may seem small to you, but can be overwhelming to others. Social service workers help service users in lots of ways for example helping people make transitions often at critical times in their lives, providing help with a benefits claim or talking through a personal problem.

Take this example of someone moving from long term adult residential care to a supported living service. Peter is moving into his own tenancy for the first time after spending most of his life in a long stay hospital. After he moves in, the cooker needs connected. This might seem like a small problem to many people, but Peter has never done anything like this before and it seems like a huge problem to tackle. Peter worries about getting the cooker connected, operating it and preparing his own meals. The situation further aggravates the mental health problems he already has.

One social service worker or a number of workers would assist this type of transition. Peter's care manager could arrange for the cooker to be connected and for other services to be delivered before he moves in. A housing support worker may help him to operate the cooker, assist him to prepare meals and discuss healthy eating options with him. A home help may visit a few times a week or every day if necessary to assist with cleaning and may also supply meals.

A career in social services is diverse and you'll use different skills every day. You will be working with people from all backgrounds, of all ages, all with varying needs. The work is challenging but extremely rewarding. You won't leave work at the end of the day thinking "What did I achieve?". You'll have the capability to make a real difference in someone else's life.

SOCIAL WORK

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SOCIAL WORK AS A CAREER

A CAREER FOR LIFE

There are many career options in social services and there are plenty of opportunities to change direction. You can, for instance, start work as a nursery assistant but end up as a manager in a care home service for adults, a qualified social worker or a nursery manager. A sector with this range of careers allows for rapid career progression and advancement.

The Scottish Social Services Council's (SSSC) has begun to register key groups of the social service workforce and set qualifications for its workers. The SSSC has published Codes of Practice for social service workers and their employers which set out the standards of practice expected in their day to day work. This strengthens the professionalism of the workforce, raising its profile, making social services a career on par with nursing, teaching and medicine. By choosing a career in social services you are entering a dynamic and rewarding profession.

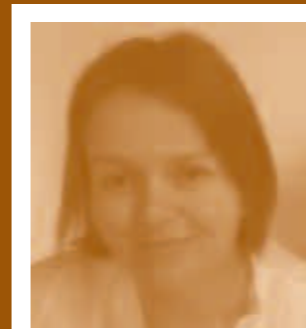
CHOOSING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES

Read on to find out more about the different types of careers in social services.



[HELP SUPPORT AND PROTECT]





MARION STODDART
AGE: 36

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:

Social Worker, Children and Families, City of Edinburgh Council.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

Locally based social work service providing support for vulnerable children and families. I manage a case load of children who are in need of care and protection and are at risk of harm or abuse. This often means working alongside other professionals such as health workers and the police. I also provide, as part of a team of social workers, a duty service which includes child protection duties.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I worked in private organisations and with the health board providing care, mainly nursing care, to older people and people with learning difficulties. I worked in a long-stay hospital for people with learning disabilities at the time of change in provision of services for people with specific care needs. People were moving from the hospital to community based care and I decided to make this transition too.

CAREER ROUTE:

In 1995 I moved to a post in a home for older people provided by the Social Work Department. Shortly after I was able to enter a role as an Assistant Unit Manager which also allowed me the opportunity for further study.

I completed the SVQ 2 which provided me with the entry requirements for an HNC in Social Care incorporating SVQ 3 which I completed in one year at Stevenson College in 1998. From this I applied for a place on the Diploma in Social Work through the Open University supported by my employer, The City of Edinburgh Council. After having my first child I spent some time working flexibly as an SVQ Workplace Assessor and Internal Verifier. I had completed my qualifications TDLB D32, D33 and D34 to enable me to do this. I enjoyed working in different areas of social work, helping workers in a range of work roles and care settings achieve their vocational qualifications.

I returned to work and completion of my Diploma in Social Work after having my second child in 2003, I wanted a return to a setting where I could engage in direct client work. I had decided on practice team based social work with children, an area of work in which I had no real experience, and felt this would be suitable learning for my final social work placement. I have remained in this post since qualifying and have had the opportunity to develop my professional practice through completion of the Investigative Interviewing of Children Course with the police in 2005. Earlier this year I also began my Graduate Certificate in Child Care and Protection through the University of Dundee.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

Since moving to work in social service provision over 10 years ago I have experienced a variety of different settings and roles. As I have engaged in further learning I feel that the opportunities for me in my career have grown and there is potential for me to transfer my skills, practice and learning to other areas. I feel confident that this opens up many opportunities for future employment throughout my career.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB?

My current role within a Children and Families practice team provides challenges often on a daily basis. There are constant challenges to my skills as a practitioner working with children and their families with unique circumstances and needs. Sometimes this can include simply the effects of managing very difficult and distressing situations whilst maintaining the professional ability to make the best decisions for the child.

IN WHAT WAY IS A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES REWARDING?

Since qualifying and working as a social worker with children I have experienced a huge learning curve. I have found that my growing knowledge and skill in this area of work has increased my confidence and I am more able to perform what can sometimes be a very difficult job, very well.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

I am hoping to complete my further studies in Child Care and Protection and see what other opportunities there are for further education in this field. I would like to continue working within Child Protection and enhance my practice further through direct work experience. Perhaps in the future I will be in a position to train and develop other social service workers from the basis of my own knowledge and experience.

SOCIAL WORK AS A CAREER

Social workers are professionals who help support and protect people who are vulnerable and at risk. They work with people who are experiencing social and emotional problems and their families if they are affected.

Social workers help clients to deal with their day to day problems which affect their mental and physical wellbeing.

They may help service users to claim benefits, plan budgets, obtain legal advice or deal with other local authority departments. Social workers undertake assessment in relation to child care, mental health and criminal justice. Depending on individual needs, a social worker may arrange services such as home care assistance or hospital treatment.

Social workers usually have an office base but spend much of their time making visits to individuals in the community, hospital and other settings. Social workers work closely with other professionals such as health professionals, workers from other local authority departments, the police and the criminal justice service.

SALARY

A social work graduate can expect an average starting salary of £20k – £23k. After the first few years social workers can earn £24 – £29k or more depending on their chosen field and post qualifying training. These are just some of the options and salary will depend on the career path a graduate takes and where they work.

SOCIAL WORKERS MUST:

- hold the honours or postgraduate degree in social work
- be committed to working with people and helping them to solve their problems
- empower clients and assist them to make choices about their future
- be able to make difficult decisions and enforce the law
- be non-judgemental and not tolerate prejudices in others
- be responsible for the standards of service provided and for continuing education and training throughout their own career
- have excellent listening skills
- be supportive and considerate
- have good negotiating skills
- be able to work well with colleagues and other professionals
- be able to prioritise their workload
- be able to build relationships
- be able to act quickly and calmly in difficult situations
- be able to work under pressure and to timescales
- register with the SSSC.

CAREER PATH AND PROGRESSION

Once you are a qualified social worker there are many different options including working in general frontline services or choosing to specialise in areas such as:

- child protection
- criminal justice
- mental health
- forensic social work
- community care
- children and families.

Social workers are always in demand and there are lots of opportunities for graduates aside from working as a front line social worker. Senior social worker, social work manager, teaching or working as an inspector for bodies such as the Care Commission or the Social Work Inspection Agency are some examples of the different roles in social work. The degree can also open up opportunities to work in other sectors throughout the UK.

TRAINING TO BECOME A SOCIAL WORKER

To be a social worker you need an honours or postgraduate degree in social work. You can gain these qualifications from eight different universities across Scotland. Both courses will include practice learning where each student is assessed while working in the field.

Glasgow School of Social Work	www.gssw.ac.uk tel: 0141 950 3380
Robert Gordon University	www.rgu.ac.uk tel: 01224 263 202
University of Edinburgh	www.ed.ac.uk tel: 0131 650 1000
University of Dundee	www.dundee.ac.uk tel: 01382 344000
Glasgow Caledonian University	www.gcal.ac.uk tel: 0141 331 8300
University of Paisley	www.paisley.ac.uk tel: 0141 848 3000
University of Stirling	www.external.stir.ac.uk tel: 01786 473171
The Open University in Scotland	www.open.ac.uk tel: 0131 226 3851



The degree

- Normally the degree takes four years at university.
- You need to meet the university course entry requirements.
- Most of the degree courses take account of relevant qualifications and employment and may offer advanced entry with credit based on this.
- Voluntary experience will be very useful if you do not have any previous experience working in social services. See page 28 for further information.

The postgraduate

- To be eligible for the postgraduate course you will normally need to hold an ordinary or honours degree. The postgraduate course is a two year full time course. It can be studied part time provided you are working in social services already and have the backing of your employer.
- You will need to meet course entry requirements – please contact the university for more information.
- Voluntary experience will be very useful if you do not have any previous experience working in social services. See page 28 for further information.

The entry requirements are different for each university; you can find out more about the course by contacting the universities directly.

For more information about applying for a degree or postgraduate course please contact UCAS on 01242 222444 or at www.ucas.ac.uk or speak to the university directly.

Student social workers are required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) before starting their course.

Your university will ensure that you receive an application pack once you have accepted a place on the course. The registration process includes an enhanced Disclosure Scotland check. More information about registration can be found on page 31 or by visiting the SSSC website www.sssc.uk.com

DEGREE AND POSTGRADUATE INITIATIVES

For information on degree and postgraduate initiatives that are currently being run, please contact the SSSC on Lo-call 0845 60 30 891.

STUDYING PART TIME OR DISTANCE LEARNING

You can only apply to study the honours or postgraduate degree part time or by distance learning if you are already employed in social services and your employer is willing to support you. This is because you will need time off and help with placements as well as funding.

Some local authorities do offer other training schemes leading to a social work qualification. For more information contact the social services department in your area of choice.

UNDERGRADUATE FUNDING FOR STUDENTS RESIDENT IN SCOTLAND

The Students Award Agency for Scotland (SAAS) will pay the tuition fees for all eligible full-time Scottish and EU students studying at publicly funded institutions in Scotland; the level of family income does not matter.

Please apply to SAAS on 0131 476 8212 or www.student-support-saas.gov.uk

POSTGRADUATE FUNDING

If you are seeking a place on a postgraduate programme and you hold a first degree or equivalent award, you may be eligible for a bursary from the SSSC. Bursaries are available if you have been offered a full time place on a postgraduate programme in Scotland. The number of bursaries available is limited and all applications are assessed against published criteria. Contact the SSSC for further information on Lo-call 0845 60 30 891 or email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com

OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

Students can apply for a loan to the Student Loans Company. They can be contacted on 0800 405 010 or www.slc.co.uk

You may be able to apply for a Career Development Loan. These loans are available to students studying in England, Scotland and Wales only. For more information phone 0800 585 505.

The National Union of Students (NUS) produces a series of information sheets on student finance. You can send an A4 stamped addressed envelope, showing the subject you need information on to: NUS Scotland, 29 Forth Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3LE, Tel: 0131 556 6598, Fax: 0131 557 5679
email: mail@nus-scotland.org.uk or www.nusonline.co.uk

ILA Scotland is a Scottish Executive scheme which helps you pay for learning that you can do at a time, place, pace and in a way that suits you. If you are over 18 and living in Scotland you could get up to £200 towards the cost of learning.

To find out more contact ILA Scotland on 0808 100 1090 or visit their website www.ilascotland.org.uk

WORKING AS A SOCIAL WORK ASSISTANT

To become a social worker you need an honours degree in social work or equivalent. However you can begin your career as a social work assistant without undertaking the degree.

A social work assistant works directly under the supervision of a senior social worker assisting them in their day to day duties or may independently manage their own case load under the supervision of their manager. They generally have a similar role and function as qualified social workers depending on the setting but deal with less complex cases. Tasks would include setting up appointments and communicating with clients, liaising with other professionals about service user cases and carrying out routine visits. Social work assistants are usually required to gain a qualification such as an HNC in Social Care or SVQs at various levels.

FINDING A JOB

There are a number of places to begin your search for a job. Your local paper is a good place to start, find out what day your local paper advertises and check it weekly, you may want to check the *The Herald* and *The Scotsman* on a Friday too.

Career fairs are also an excellent way of finding work and will allow you to meet your potential employers face to face. Many organisations take along application forms at these events allowing you to apply for jobs right there and then. Check your local paper for fairs in your area.

Joining a recruitment agency is also an effective way of getting a position. After you join, the agency will try to match you with a job and keep you on their records and contact you if any suitable position arises. Many agencies have websites so that you can search for a job online. You may find the following job search websites useful:

www.scotcareers.co.uk

www.s1jobs.com

www.monster.com

www.reed.co.uk

USEFUL WEBSITES

Students may find the following websites useful:

www.sssc.uk.com

www.socialworkcareers.co.uk

www.basw.co.uk

PROFILE

SOCIAL CARE

WORKING IN SOCIAL CARE



[CHALLENGING AND REWARDING]



BRIAN EMMERSON
AGE: 45

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:

Children's Service Manager – Barnardo's Shield Fostering Service

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

I manage a fostering service for Barnardo's which covers the West of Scotland. I am responsible for seven members of staff and 18 foster caring families providing placements for 34 young people.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

No, previously I was a chef. I decided I wanted to work with young people and had always seen this as my ideal career but had not followed this career path till I had 'grown up a bit'

CAREER ROUTE:

1985 – I started as a residential worker in a girls' assessment unit in the London Borough of Hillingdon and remained there till 1988 when my family and I moved back to Scotland. I joined Barnardo's on my return in 1988 as a senior residential worker in a residential List D school. The school closed in 1990 and I was seconded by Barnardo's on to the social work course at Jordanhill College. I successfully achieved my Certificate of Qualification in Social Work in 1992 and returned to work at Barnardo's as a project worker in the Faith and Community project, this lasted for four months following which I became the Deputy Project Manager at Barnardo's Glasgow 16+ a leaving care service. During my time in this service I achieved a counselling qualification, became a workplace assessor (D32/33) for SVQs and a Masters degree in Management at Stirling University. In 2000 I applied for and was successful in getting the post of Children's Service Manager - my current post.

WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND A JOB IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I would recommend people to think about a career in social services because it is an extremely rewarding field to work in. There are opportunities for career development which combine learning and work experiences.

The tasks are varied and working for a large voluntary organisation like Barnardo's provides employees with opportunities to focus on direct work with children and young people.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB?

The job is never the same from day to day. I can never guess what I am going to walk into and have to be ready to face whatever comes through the door. As a manager of a fostering service there are a number of external challenges that include the service being inspected and the relationships we build and maintain with the Local Authorities that place children with us. The issue of managing staff is also a challenge, in how I ensure the foster carers receive the support they need and therefore provide high quality placements to the young people, and the staff teams needs are also met. The future is very exciting especially in the 'fostering world' and Barnardo's will be in the forefront of providing young people with high quality foster placements all over Scotland and I am looking forward to playing my part in this.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

It offers a career that is very challenging and never boring. The opportunities for people from all walks of life to help young people are many and varied. The learning that is available is first class and coupled with the requirement for people to have recognised qualifications who are working with young people is a really good opportunity for people to further develop their skills and experience.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

I am currently happy with the level that I am operating at and do not see me progressing any further up the management ladder.

WORKING IN SOCIAL CARE

Social care is a challenging and rewarding career. Social care workers provide support and help to people who need it, helping them to live full and valued lives in the community. Social care workers can work with a variety of people from all different backgrounds and of all abilities. They work closely with other professionals such as community nursing staff, workers from other local authority departments and the police. Social care services can be privately owned or run by the public or voluntary sector.

Social care involves working with lots of different people who use social services including:

- › carers of people who use social services
- › older adults
- › children and young people
- › children or adults with physical and/or learning disabilities
- › people with mental health problems
- › people who misuse alcohol or drugs
- › homeless people
- › refugees and asylum seekers
- › people with HIV/AIDS.

Staff can work in a variety of different settings and in many different roles.

CARE HOME SERVICES FOR CHILDREN OR ADULTS

People who use these services live in a home where they receive care services. People who use social services can vary and include looked after children, children with behavioural problems, children and adults with learning disabilities, individuals with mental health problems, or older adults who can no longer live in their own home.

Staff in care homes assist people who use services in their daily lives promoting and encouraging independence wherever possible. The role of the social care worker includes developing care plans to meet the needs of individuals, providing opportunities for socialisation and stimulation and assisting service users to maintain and develop relationships which are important to them. Staff also help service users with personal care, including assistance with washing and dressing, provision of meals and administration of medication.

CARE AT HOME/HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Care at home and housing support services assist vulnerable adults to continue living within their own homes. These services are used by a variety of people including older adults, children and young people and their families, adults with a physical and/or learning disability, individuals with mental health problems, people who misuse alcohol or drugs and people with HIV/AIDS. Both services support individuals to become an active part of the community and promote independence.

Care at home workers assist people in their own homes with personal care activities such as bathing and dressing. Workers may also assist with the provision of meals, cleaning and food shopping.

Workers in housing support services assist individuals to meet their duties and responsibilities as tenants. Workers help people with activities such as claiming for benefits, budgeting, maintaining a healthy life style and may provide general counselling and advice.

DAY CARE SERVICES

Day care services are used by a variety of people who use social services. Workers provide a supportive environment in which individuals can develop skills and participate in a wide range of activities such as arts and crafts and sports. Individuals are encouraged to meet people and learn skills that could lead to greater independence. Services have traditionally been provided within a day centre environment but increasingly workers also assist service users to make use of community resources to develop skills which enables them to do this.

SHORT BREAKS AND RESPITE CARE

Short breaks and respite care provide people who use services and their carers with a break. This improves quality of life and helps to support the service user and carer(s) relationship. Short breaks and respite can range from a few hours to a few weeks and can take place in a variety of places including respite units or care homes. It can also involve the service user taking a holiday break with care workers.

Duties can vary and may include personal care services such as bathing, dressing and meal provision.



MARION GARLAND
AGE: 47

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:

Unit Manager, Menzieshill House, Dundee City Council

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

I manage a 32 bed local authority residential home and am responsible for the social wellbeing of the residents and their health and safety. I manage 49 members of staff and the security of the environment. Responsibilities include managing the budget, care planning, networking with other agencies, rotas, health and safety.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I left school in 1974 with an English O level. I then worked as a clerical/accounts officer until the birth of my first child in 1979, I later commenced work on a part time basis in a privately owned residential home for older people.

CAREER ROUTE:

After working at a privately owned residential home for older people for a year, I moved to a local authority residential unit (Strathmore House) as a Social Care Officer, where I worked for five years. During that time I undertook an SVQ level 2 in Social Care. I was promoted to a Senior Social Care Officer and completed the SVQ 3 and HNC in Social Care. My promotion meant a transfer to Ancrum House and after 18 months I took up the Acting Manager post. I transferred to Menzieshill House, in 1998 and in 2003 completed the Diploma in Social Work through The Open University and secured the Permanent Manager's Post.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

It can be a very rewarding job and you can really make a difference in people's lives. There are lots of opportunities for development and promotion as well as study.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE AS A MANAGER?

Developing a quality service for older people within budgetary constraints.

HOW ARE YOU PREPARING YOURSELF AND THE REST OF YOUR TEAM FOR REGISTRATION WITH THE SSSC?

The majority of social care officers within the service have now been awarded SVQ 2 and we are now helping to prepare the others to gain this qualification. I am about to undertake the K303 Managing Care Award through the Open University.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

Continuing to provide and develop the quality of the service provided to older people in residential care.

SALARY

The salary of a social care worker can vary depending on the type of service, position held and the qualifications the worker holds. Salaries in social care can start from around £9k. If you have social care qualifications and experience then your starting salary may be higher than this. A qualified social care worker working in a short break service can expect to earn around £15k – £20k. A qualified unit manager for a care home service for adults with several years' experience can expect to earn around £25k – £28k.

Social care workers must:

- ▶ empower service users and assist them to make choices about their future
- ▶ be non-judgemental and promote tolerance in others
- ▶ be supportive, considerate and have good listening skills
- ▶ be able to build relationships with service users, relatives and other professionals
- ▶ work well as part of a team
- ▶ be able to communicate well with service users, carers and other professionals
- ▶ be able to work calmly and quickly in an emergency
- ▶ be able to administer basic first aid
- ▶ be prepared to gain the relevant qualifications as set out for registration with the SSSC
- ▶ be prepared to work flexible hours including evenings, weekends and public holidays.

STARTING YOUR CAREER

If you would like a career in social care, getting some experience of working in the sector is a good place to start. Experience, whether paid or unpaid will enhance your prospects and give you an opportunity to find out if you would enjoy the job. Please see page 28 for further information on volunteering.

You can begin your career in social care without any formal qualifications, but you must be willing to gain them while you work.

If you would like to gain a qualification before you start your career, contact your local college for further information on social care courses.

Many jobs within social care need staff to work flexible hours. There are opportunities to work on a part-time basis, or work particular times to fit in with your commitments.

FINDING A JOB

There are a number of places to begin your search for a job. Your local paper is a good place to start, find out what day your local paper advertises and check it weekly, you may want to check *The Herald* and *The Scotsman* on a Friday too.

Career fairs are also an excellent way of finding work and will allow you to meet your potential employers face to face. Many organisations take along application forms at these events allowing you to apply for jobs right there and then. Check your local paper for fairs in your area.

Joining a recruitment agency is also an effective way of getting a position. After you join the agency will try to match you with a job and keep you on their records and contact you if any suitable position arises. Many agencies have websites so that you can search for a job online. You may find the following websites useful:

www.scotcareers.co.uk

www.s1jobs.com

www.monster.com

www.reed.co.uk

FUNDING FOR TRAINING

If you are considering doing a social care course, contact your local college to discuss funding. Depending on your circumstances you may be eligible for the payment of course fees or grants.

Work based qualifications (SVQs) are usually funded by employers and you can discuss the options directly with them. Once you are working in social care there are opportunities for further education and training. The employee development officer for your organisation will be able to give you advice.

ILA SCOTLAND

ILA Scotland is a Scottish Executive scheme which helps you pay for learning that you can do at a time, place, pace and in a way that suits you. If you are over 18 and living in Scotland you could get up to £200 towards the cost of learning.

To find out more contact ILA Scotland on 0808 100 1090 or visit their website www.ilascotland.org.uk

USEFUL WEBSITES**Volunteer Scotland**

website of the volunteer centre network in Scotland designed for people who want to volunteer or find out more about volunteering.

www.volunteerscotland.org.uk

Social Care Association

A membership association for people working in social care.

www.socialcaring.co.uk

Careers Scotland

A starting point for anyone looking for careers information, advice or guidance.

www.careers-scotland.org.uk

Jobcentre Plus

Information on finding work and financial support.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Scottish Qualifications Authority

www.sqa.org.uk

PROFILE



KEITH DOWNIE
AGE: 38

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:
Depute Manager, The Jean Drummond Centre

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:
I work alongside my Manager and two Day Centre Officers to provide a Day Support Service for adults over the age of forty who have been assessed as having a learning disability. This day support service is person centred and concentrates on the needs of each individual service user.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I originally trained as a chef in Edinburgh at the same time I was pursuing a career as a professional golfer. When I realised that a career in golf was not going to materialise, I undertook a course in physical education and community studies. During this course I undertook a placement at a facility that catered for children and young adults who had severe communication difficulties, and at this point I realised that I would like to try to make a career in this direction.

I moved to Dundee after meeting my wife and I commenced work at The Jean Drummond Centre in autumn of 1995 as a Day Centre Officer. By 1998 I had progressed to the position of Deputy Manager, a position I still hold and enjoy to this day.

I have also gained the following qualifications while working in social care: Community Care 1 and 2 and SVQ 4 in Social Care from UK Centre for Continuing Professional Development in 2005. I am currently completing the Registered Managers Award in Social Care.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE WHO IS CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I love working in this sector and cannot see myself doing anything else. It is a hugely rewarding career and you have the opportunity to work with some really wonderful individuals. I am delighted I decided to pursue a career in social care and I have absolutely no regrets. You can benefit from a huge sense of satisfaction and the people who use the service are among some of the best people I have had the privilege to meet.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB?

Every day is different and you never know what will happen. Since the introduction of the Care Commission and the SSSC the whole of the social care sector has had to adapt and become far more professional. Obviously having to adhere to the Care Standards and Codes of Practice has meant that we have had to develop and implement many more policies and procedures, but although demanding, this has been very enjoyable and eye opening as to the legal requirements of the service.

IN WHAT WAY IS A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES REWARDING?

The people you have the opportunity to work with, and alongside. The satisfaction of knowing that you are enabling the service users to achieve dreams and aspirations that they might have thought were beyond them, an example being, we are taking a group of six service users to London in May to visit the Houses of Parliament, a logistical challenge, but one which has given the service users such a thrill.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

How long is a piece of string? Seriously though, I am very happy in my present position and we are fortunate enough to have a dedicated, professional and excellent team at the Jean Drummond Centre. Opportunities are always there in the social care sector and who knows what the future may hold, but if anyone is considering a career in this sector my advice to them would be "Go for It".

CHILD CARE

4

WORKING IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE



WORKING IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

A career in early education and child care involves working with pre school and school age children often in a play group, out of school care, nursery or crèche setting. There is a high demand for workers in this area with many parents relying on child care.

Pre school education is very important to a child, helping them to develop the skills they'll use throughout their life.

Early education and child care workers provide care and education to children, helping them to learn and develop a range of skills through play. They can work with children from birth to 12 years old from all backgrounds and of all abilities. Workers plan and support play based activities and may feed children and change nappies where appropriate. Early education and child care workers are required to observe and assess children's needs so they need to be skilful at writing reports.

They are also involved in supporting children's learning often by working with the pre-fives' curriculum. This includes supporting children who are learning to read, to use numbers and to solve problems. This means that workers need to be good listeners and have good levels of communication. They will also work closely with parents and carers. Leadership and team working skills are essential for early years workers.

Early education and child care workers are responsible for the children in their care and must be able to act quickly in an emergency and be able to carry out basic first aid. They will also work with nursery and infant teachers, health visitors, social workers, Care Commission officers and other professionals.

Working in early education and child care can also involve delivering out of school care and holiday clubs. This work involves delivering activities and care to children in their free time. You can work in a variety of settings including play groups, nurseries, child and family centres and crèches. Services can be run privately, by a local authority, be part of a school or be run through the voluntary sector by organisations such as Scottish Women's Aid.

There are many opportunities for development and career progression in this field. Throughout their career, early education and child care workers can continue to undertake professional qualifications and can go on to do part time or full time degrees and higher qualifications. There are research, inspection, lecturing and teaching opportunities and workers can also become managers or open their own nursery.

Early education and child care workers must:

- › be patient, caring and work well with children
- › be responsible for the safety of the children in their care
- › be able to support children's learning
- › have excellent communication skills including listening skills
- › be able to teach children to carry out activities
- › be able to act quickly and calmly in an emergency
- › have lots of energy, they spend most of the day on their feet
- › work well as part of a team
- › be able to carry out instructions
- › build relationships with children and their parents
- › be prepared to gain the relevant qualifications as set out for registration with the SSSC.

SALARY

Salaries vary depending on the position, qualifications the worker holds and whether the service is privately owned or state run. A nursery nurse can earn between £9k – £14k a year. Senior posts such as a nursery manager position can earn up to £21k annually.

STARTING YOUR CAREER

If you would like a career in early education and child care, getting some experience of working with children is a good place to start. Experience whether paid or unpaid enhances your prospects and gives you an opportunity to find out if you would enjoy the job. Please see page 28 for further information on volunteering.

You can begin your career in early education and child care without any formal qualifications, but you must be willing to gain them while you work.

If you would like to gain a qualification before you start your career, contact your local college for further information on early education and child care courses.



GILLIAN DAND
AGE: 26

CURRENT JOB TITLE AND WORKPLACE:

Manager of Langlea Nursery School

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

Supervision of staff, curriculum planning, partnership with parents and carers, supervising daily routine, catering for every child's individual needs, planning, reporting and all round assessing.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS WORKED IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

I worked in Asda as a shop floor assistant, I also trained for checkout, customer services and reception. My next step up would have been to do supervisory training but I did not want a career in retail.

CAREER ROUTE:

I completed my NC and HNC in Childcare and Education at Melrose Terrace College in 1998. I started at Langlea Nursery School in February 2001. I have been in my current post as manager for six months and am in the process of completing the PDA in Childcare and Education.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SOMEONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES?

It's a career which gives you job satisfaction, variety and career prospects.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO YOU FACE IN YOUR JOB?

Managing staff, legislation laws, planning changes and adhering to local and national guidelines.

IN WHAT WAY IS A CAREER IN SOCIAL SERVICES REWARDING?

Being part of their pre-school education and seeing them through a smooth transition to their primary school years.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR CAREER PROGRESSING?

I am content in my job at present and have no plans to leave in the near future.

FINDING A JOB

There are a number of places to begin your search for a job. Your local paper is a good place to start, find out what day your local paper advertises and check it weekly, you may want to check the *The Herald* and *The Scotsman* on a Friday too.

Career fairs are also an excellent way of finding work and will allow you to meet your potential employers face to face. Many organisations take along application forms at these events allowing you to apply for jobs right there and then. Check your local paper for fairs in your area.

Joining a recruitment agency is also an effective way of getting a position. After you join the agency will try to match you with a job and keep you on their records and contact you if any suitable position arises. Many agencies have websites so that you can search for a job online. You may find the following job search websites useful:

www.scotcareers.co.uk

www.s1jobs.com

www.monster.com

www.reed.co.uk

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www.ilascotland.org.uk

USEFUL WEBSITES

Scottish Qualifications Authority
www.sqa.org.uk

Scottish Out of School Care Network
www.soscn.org

Learning and Teaching Scotland
www.itscotland.org.uk

Nursery World
www.nurseryworld.co.uk

Care Commission
www.carecommission.com

Children in Scotland
www.childreninScotland.org.uk

5 VOLUNTEERING



[AN EXTRA HELPING HAND]



VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERING

Working as a volunteer in social services can be extremely satisfying and rewarding. Whether your chosen career is social work, social care or early education and child care, getting some experience is the best place to start.

Volunteering gives you the opportunity to work in social services, gives you relevant experience to put down on your CV and provides you with a recent reference. It also proves that you are committed to working in the sector which will impress a college, university or potential employer.

The great thing about volunteering in social services is that you can decide where you want to do it, how often and how long for. Is there some place that you have always wanted to work? Most organisations welcome an extra helping hand. Volunteering also allows you to explore the idea of a new career without giving up your existing employment, you can fit it in to suit your existing commitments, even just volunteering for a few hours a week will provide you with valuable experience. Some positions turn into paid work – volunteering is the perfect opportunity to prove yourself.

VOLUNTEERING AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

If you are unemployed you can undertake unpaid voluntary work and continue to claim unemployment benefit or income support provided you are free to attend interviews and take up a job if offered one.

GETTING INVOLVED

The best way of getting a voluntary position is by looking at the sort of social service organisations you would be interested in working for. You can do this by looking through your local *Yellow Pages*. Once you have found a few organisations that you are interested in, give them a call and ask them about opportunities for volunteers. You can also find out about opportunities through voluntary agencies. Statutory bodies such as local authority social services/work departments may also have opportunities. The addresses of volunteer bureaux or councils for voluntary service are listed in telephone directories, public libraries and Citizens Advice Bureaux.

REGISTRATION WITH THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

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The following organisations can be contacted for more information:

VOLUNTEER CENTRE NETWORK SCOTLAND

The Volunteer Centre Network in Scotland is made up of 42 volunteer centres and helps people get involved in volunteering. The centres provide information about a whole range of volunteer opportunities in your local area and beyond.

www.volunteerscotland.info

WORKWITHUS.ORG

A useful website providing links to different voluntary organisations. This site has specific pages about volunteering and social care.

For further information visit:

www.workwithus.org

CHARITIES

National charities and voluntary organisations look for volunteers on a continuous basis. Their contact details can be found in your *Yellow Pages* or telephone directory.

You may find the following organisations useful:

THE CHILDREN'S PANEL

In Scotland, panel members sit on children's hearings and make key decisions about children that, in other countries, would be made in court.

For further information, contact:

Tel: 0131 244 5483

www.childrenshearingscotland.gov.uk

return fares to and from home at the beginning and end of the project.

For further information, contact:

Tel: 020 7278 6601

www.csv.org.uk

STUDENT VOLUNTEERING SCOTLAND (SVS)

An organisation of student volunteers.

For further information, contact:

Tel: 01786 479 593

www.studentvolscotland.org.uk

DO-IT.ORG.UK

A website containing news and features on volunteer work and a database allowing you to search for volunteer opportunities by geographical area.

For further information, contact:

Tel: 020 7226 8008

www.do-it.org.uk

COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS (CSV)

A national organisation that helps place people between 16 – 35 in voluntary projects usually lasting four months to a year. Projects are available throughout the UK and volunteers are often placed away from their home area. All CSVs receive pocket money, meals, and if placed away from home, rent-free accommodation and

PROJECT SCOTLAND

Project Scotland was set up to connect young Scots aged between 16 and 25 with full time volunteering opportunities.

For further information, contact:

Tel: 08458 416 225

www.projectscotland.co.uk

[A COMPETENT, CONFIDENT AND VALUED WORKFORCE]



REGISTRATION WITH THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is responsible for registering key groups of people who work in social services and regulating their education and training.

Registration will increase the protection of people who use social services by ensuring that workers are trained, have the right qualifications for the job that they are doing and are properly regulated.

The SSSC has established a public Register which contains the names of registered social service workers who meet the registration criteria. There are over 138,000 social service workers in Scotland and the SSSC will register key groups of workers in phases. Below are the groups set so far.

PHASE ONE REGISTERING NOW

- Social workers
- Students on the new social work honours degree and postgraduate programmes
- Care Commission officers
- Managers of residential child care services
- Supervisors within residential child care services
- Managers of care home services for adults
- Managers of adult day care services

REGISTERING FROM JULY 2006

- Residential child care workers

PHASE TWO (FROM OCTOBER 2006)

The following workers will be in phase two of registration

- Managers/lead practitioners of early education and child care services (from October 2006)
- Practitioners of early education and child care (from March 2007)
- Supervisors in adult residential care (from September 2007)
- Support workers in early education and child care (from October 2008)
- Practitioners in adult residential care (from January 2009)
- Support workers in adult residential care (from April 2009)
- Workers in housing support services (from autumn 2009)

THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

For more information on registration and the qualifications that have been set please visit our website – www.sssc.uk.com or call us on 0845 60 30 891.

Scottish Social Services Council
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Lo-call: 0845 60 30 891
Fax: 01382 207215
Email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com
www.sssc.uk.com

If you would like to request this document in another format or language,
please contact the SSSC on 0845 60 30 891.

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